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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant : Kuznetsov et al.

) Group Art Unit 3651

Appl. No. : 10/009,851

Filed : November 6, 2001

For : METHOD FOR
TRANSFERRING WAFERS
AND RING

) I hereby certify that this correspondence and all
) marked documents are being deposited with
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) mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner
) for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA
) 22313-1450, on

) September 15, 2003

) (Date)

) Adeel S. Akhtar

) Adeel S. Akhtar, Reg. No. 41,394

Examiner : Joseph A. Dillon, Jr.

**RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT
AND PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

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Dear Sir:

In an action mailed July 15, 2003, the Examiner required restriction of prosecution to one of three groups of claims.

A Response to the Restriction Requirement begins on page 2 of this paper.

In addition, prior to examination on the merits, please amend the subject application as indicated below.

Amendments to the Specification begin on page 3 of this paper.

Amendments to the Claims are reflected in the listing of claims which begins on page 4 of this paper.

Remarks begin on page 6 of this paper.

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RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

In an action mailed July 15, 2003, the Examiner required restriction of prosecution to one of the following groups of claims:

- Group I Claims 22-33 and 47, drawn to a method of loading/unloading a chamber;
- Group II Claims 34-41, drawn to a thermal treatment chamber;
- Group III Claims 42-43, drawn to an installation/ring combination; or
- Group IV Claims 44-46, drawn to a ring mount.

In response to this restriction requirement, Applicants elect to proceed, with traverse (see below), with prosecution on the merits of Group II (Claims 34-41).

Applicants respectfully request that Claims 42-43 also be considered with Claims 34-41. The Examiner has stated that Claims 34-41 are “drawn to a thermal treatment **chamber**” and that Claims 42-43 are “drawn to an installation/**ring** combination.” (emphasis added). Applicants note, however, that both independent Claims 34 and 42 recite both a “treatment chamber” and a “ring.” As such, Applicants submit that searches regarding Claims 34-41 would overlap searches regarding Claims 42-43. Given this overlap, Applicants respectfully submit that prosecution of Claims 34-41 and Claims 42-43 together would not present an undue burden for examination, despite any patentable differences between these two groups of claims. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request submit that Claims 42-43 should be considered together with Claims 34-41 in this prosecution.

Also, Applicants submit that new Claim 48 also overlaps Group II and requests that Claim 47 be considered with Claims 34-41.